



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/414,547	10/08/1999	TOKIMORI TOMITA	122.1046-D/G	3462
21171	7590	08/25/2005	EXAMINER	
STAAS & HALSEY LLP SUITE 700 1201 NEW YORK AVENUE, N.W. WASHINGTON, DC 20005			KARMIS, STEFANOS	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3624	

DATE MAILED: 08/25/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/414,547	TOMITA ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Stefano Karmis	3624	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 03 May 2005.
- 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 78-93 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 78-93 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____. |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____. | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____. |

DETAILED ACTION

1. The following communication is in response to Applicant's amendment filed 03 May 2005.

Status of Claims

2. Claims 1-9, 11, 13-16, 19-23, 27, 31, 36, 38-49, 51, 52 and 54-77 are currently cancelled. Claims 10, 12, 17, 18, 24-26, 28-30, 32-35 and 37 are previously cancelled. Claims 78-93 are newly added.

Response to Arguments

3. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 78-93 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

4. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

5. Claims 92 and 93 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Schultz et al. (hereinafter Schultz) U.S. Patent No. 5,056,019.

Regarding claims 92 and 93, Schultz discloses a point management method managing points issued to each customer via a computer comprising extracting purchase data responsive to a customer transaction (column 7, lines 45-67); correlating extracted purchase data of the customer transaction with a purchase condition table stored by a provider (column 8, lines 1-29 and calculating and issuing points in relation to a customer in accordance with the correlation of the extracted purchase data with the purchase condition table including target points for which the customer is eligible to receive a credit (column 8, lines 48-63).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

6. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

7. The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.

Art Unit: 3624

8. The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

9. Claims 78-93 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Schultz et al. (hereinafter Schultz) U.S. Patent No. 5,056,019 in view of Humble U.S. Patent NO. 4,949,256.

Regarding claims 78-91, Schultz teaches a point management system connected with a customer terminal via a communication link, employing a computer for managing points issued to each customer who receives services according to the issued points, comprising: a point issuing unit to issue the points to a customer according to transactions performed by the customer (column 6, lines 5-12); a point accumulation unit to calculate and accumulate the issued points (column 6, line 13-27 and column 8, lines 43-63 and column 10, lines 21-28); a customer identification unit to identify the customer according to customer identification information obtained from the customer terminal (column 7, lines 5-19 and column 9, lines 66 thru column 10, line 13) and a notifying unit to notify the customer of the cumulative points accumulated by the point accumulation unit by sending the cumulative point so the customer (column 8, lines 43-68 and column 10, lines 7-28). Schultz teaches that upon providing frequent shopper customer identification for a purchase, a process begins in which a reward certificate containing the accumulated points is sent to the customer. The customer can then return with

this reward certificate and present identification to perform a transaction. Schultz fails to teach that the notification of the accumulated points happens when the customer is identified. Humble teaches a coupon validation network in which each customer participating in the interactive network will be issued an identification card, which is encoded to identify the customer and provide access to the customer's coupon account which are accumulated and used during transactions (column 7, lines 16-48). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the Applicant's invention to modify the teachings of Schultz to include notification of the accumulated points when verifying customer identification as taught by Humble because it allows for the customer to use the accumulated points during a current transaction and further, Schultz teaches that when the customer receives the accumulated points, identification must be shown to use the reward certificate. By combining Schultz with Humble, those two steps taught by Shultz could be incorporated into one step, as taught by Humble.

Conclusion

10. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after

Art Unit: 3624

the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Stefano Karmis whose telephone number is (571) 272-6744. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F: 8-5.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Vincent Millin can be reached on (571) 272-6747. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Respectfully Submitted
Stefano Karmis
11 August 2005

VINCENT MILLIN
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 3600

